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ABSTRACT

A study conducted in Massachusetts between October 1986 and May 1987 assessed the behaviors and skills principals exhibit when they make curricular revisions. Questionnaires were sent to all superintendents in Massachusetts, of which 48 were returned. From the information furnished by these questionnaires, 18 principals were selected for onsite visits and observations. Ultimately, only 14 of the principals were observed. Actual curriculum development meetings between principals and teachers were observed, followed by conferences with the principals. Four of the visits are detailed in this document. The four sites of the documented observations are a middle school with 480 students in a suburb west of Boston; a K-6 school in northeastern Massachusetts; a large city middle school with 730 students; and a middle school with 800 students in a middle class suburb. The principals could be observed to use two types of strategies; one strategy stressed curriculum development, and the other emphasized enabling actions. Principals may be trained to apply these skills and behaviors in a more systematic manner. More visits to principals to validate the study and staff development to train principals in employing the skills are recommended. (RG)

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A Study of Exemplary School Administrators

by Laurence W. Aronstein, Ed. D.
Kenneth L. DeBenedictis, Ed. D.

Commonwealth Leadership Academy
Massachusetts Department of Education

EA 020 195

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1986-87

Academy
Fellows

Forward

"The Principal as a Leader of Curriculum Change: A Study of Exemplary Principals", was conducted through the cooperation of the Commonwealth Leadership Academy of the Massachusetts Department of Education. The research and writing for the project occurred between October 1986 and May 1987, during which time we were involved as Academy Fellows.

The Leadership Academy is a component of Chapter 188 of the Public School Improvement Act of 1985. The goals of the Academy Fellow Program are to provide selected, practicing school administrators opportunities to further develop and refine their skills through participation in the governance of the Academy, gain a state-wide perspective on education, and complete an independent research project. The research effort is intended to contribute to the fellows' growth and to assist the Department of Education in improving educational leadership.

We wish to express our appreciation for the support we received from the Department of Education, particularly Commissioner Harold Raynolds, Jr. and Patricia Brown, Director of the Office of Professional Development.

Our appreciation also goes to Sandy Thomas and Nancy Traina-Sulek of the Department of Education for their work with the Academy Fellows this year.

The Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents was most supportive of our work and recognized our interest in completing our study. For their help, we are most grateful.

We are especially appreciative of the support and cooperation we received from our respective school districts. The Bedford Public Schools and Westford Public Schools provided encouragement and allowed for appropriate flexibility while enabling us to participate in the Academy Fellows program. In particular we thank the School Committees of both districts and Joseph Buckley, Superintendent of Bedford, and Dr. John Crisafulli, Superintendent of Westford Public Schools and Dr. Henry Zabierek, Director of Curriculum.

Finally, we have enjoyed a unique opportunity to visit fourteen exciting schools. To the administrators and teachers who are providing some very professional teaching and learning opportunities for students, we are most grateful for the time they allowed us to share together. We thank these Fellow professionals who are contributing to a blueprint for educational improvement in Massachusetts.

INTRODUCTION

Educators generally agree that the best instruction takes place in classrooms in which teachers are direct owners and creators of the curriculum. Unfortunately, most observers would probably submit that textbooks and commercially produced teaching materials are in practice the cornerstones of the curriculum.

Current criticism of the American educational scene indicates that teachers work in isolation from their fellow professionals and rarely are involved in curriculum development activities with their colleagues.

Are there schools which promote teacher involvement in "in-house" curriculum development? The effective schools literature suggests that the leadership of the principal is central to the establishment of good schools. The literature describes the school principal as one who possesses a vision, is an effective communicator, involves teachers in the decision-making process, establishes high standards for student performance, enlists community involvement and support, and monitors and evaluates student achievement.

What is lacking in regard to effective schools research are the specific behaviors and skills which school principals demonstrate in the carrying out of curriculum planning and development.

Literature on effective teaching specifically identifies teacher moves (behaviors and skills) that maximize student learning (Saphier and Gower, "The Skillful Teacher", 1982). The

assumption is that these behaviors can be taught, and teachers can learn them. The pay-off is improved instruction and learning.

Our hypothesis is that there are specific administrative moves which make for more effective leadership, resulting in improved instruction and learning. Further, we hypothesize that these moves can be used by all principals and other administrators at all levels, and are teachable and learnable.

Objectives

What are these skills? What behaviors are observable? Are there patterns to these strategies that might be helpful for others to learn? These were the major questions that led to our research. These questions were the central focus of our research activities.

Procedures

Following several lengthy planning sessions, it was decided that direct observation of a principal interacting with small groups of teachers would provide an effective vehicle to identify and analyze significant curriculum development behaviors. To aid in the identification of successful school principals, a questionnaire was prepared for mailing to all superintendents in Massachusetts. Superintendents were requested to describe briefly a recent in-house curriculum effort directed by the nominated principal.

It was understood that there were limitations to this

approach because it relied upon the perceptions of the superintendent to the exclusion of any other resource (teachers, parents, peers, State Department of Education personnel, professional organizations), but it was also felt that this approach provided a manageable direction and offered some consistency in the data received.

Response

Forty-eight responses were returned. Following a paper screening based on the appropriateness and comprehensiveness of the data, thirty-two principals were telephoned, and during the course of a twenty to forty-five minute conversation we examined four questions. What curricular projects do you take pride in? What role did you play? What projects are in process? What in your opinion makes you an effective curriculum planner?

Selection

Responses to these questions and related information resulted in the selection of eighteen principals for on-site visits/observations. Because of difficulties with the scheduling of four individuals, fourteen principals were ultimately observed. In developing procedures for the observation, we purposely did not design a pre-conceived checklist of skills and behaviors, so as to not prejudice our observations or conclusions.

Limitations and Assumptions

We visited fourteen school principals. We do not claim that these are the best, nor the most exemplary, principals in the Commonwealth with regard to curriculum development skills. They were, in their superintendents' opinions, exemplars in their school systems. We attempted to vary our visits in terms of level (elementary, middle, and high school), size of school, demographics of the school setting, extent of experience and gender of the principal.

Our observational data were based on one visit, typically lasting between two and three hours.

Exemplary Principals

Name	School	Town
Auger, Jade	South School	Andover
Berman, Maureen	Jefferson Elementary School	Rockland
Calnan, Theodore	New Bedford High School	New Bedford
Conners, Richard	Marshall Simonds Middle School	Burlington
Damon, Parker	McCarthy-Towne School	Acton
Delaney, John	Parker Middle School	Reading
Garvey, Dr. James	Burncoat Middle School	Worcester
Hentz, Robert	Job Lane Elementary School	Bedford
King, Susan	Pine Grove School	Rowley
Rantz, Phyllis	Burke School	Peabody
Risi, Guido	Hatherly Elementary School	Scituate
Schaye, Dr. Richard	Wayland Junior High School	Wayland
Schofield, Dr. Edward	Fiske School	Wellesley
St. John, Alfred	Anawan/Palmer School	Rehoboth

Organizing the Visit

Prior to each of our visits, we explained to the principal that we wanted to observe an actual curriculum planning session between the principal and a group of teachers. We would simply be present to record the interactions during the session and would not participate. Secondly, we would confer with the principal at the conclusion of the planning session in order to ask such clarifying questions as: As the instructional leader, what skills did you bring to this meeting? Why did you ask...? What did you learn from the response you received? What was your strategy during this meeting? What were the outcomes?

Recording Data

Both of us acted as recorders, getting down as much data as we could. One of us asked a short series of questions during the post-observation conference. The other recorded the questions and the answers. Follow-up questions were asked when it was necessary to elicit greater clarity.

The Case Studies

Each visit was documented as a case study. The case study was written in four parts: Background, The Observation, The Post-Conference, and Analysis. Wherever possible, actual quotes were used, particularly in the post-conference section, in order to provide first-hand data.

The analysis focused upon a small number of skills or

behaviors of the principal which seemed to be emphasized during the observation. We attempted to document evidence of these skills and behaviors through a concise synthesis of the data.

The Models

Upon completion of the fourteen school visits, all building observations were analyzed and summary conclusions of administrative behaviors and skills reviewed. Specific behaviors identified in the Analysis section of each case study were written on 3x5 cards and further examined. After lengthy discussion, it was determined that two distinct models were emerging: one set of strategies that focused on curriculum development and the other more closely on enabling actions.

Two models, as a result, were created to reflect the collected data. Cooperatively Changing Curriculum: A Model for the Principal sequences those behavioral moves cumulatively collected from the study.

Exemplary principals when cooperatively working with staff to create curriculum use the following twelve step process:

COOPERATIVELY CHANGING CURRICULUM: A MODEL FOR THE PRINCIPAL

RECOGNIZING A PROBLEM

GATHERING DATA

- Identifying data from diverse sources

COOPERATIVELY ANALYZING ISSUES & DATA

DEFINING THE REAL PROBLEM

- Integrating and synthesizing related issues

GENERATING IDEAS AS POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

- Recognizing a good idea
- Approving, advancing, and supporting ideas
- Publicly recognizing and rewarding initiative
- Participating in generating ideas through brainstorming

COOPERATIVELY ASSESSING READINESS OF STAFF TO ACCEPT IDEAS

- Acquiring information before assessing the acceptability of the idea
- Launching "trial balloons" to generate staff reaction to ideas
- Analyzing the pressures for change
- Approaching the process in a scholarly manner -- "What does research say?"

SYNTHESIZING THE IDEA

- Framing ideas into the "big picture"
- Sharing the vision with teachers
- Allowing the vision to evolve with further input
- Extending the idea from the classroom to the grade level to the school system
- Cross-pollinating the idea with other ideas

SETTING PRIORITIES

- Publicly stating agreed upon goals

CONCEPTUALIZING A DESIGN TOWARD THE DEVELOPMENT OF A CURRICULUM

- Thinking through a step-by-step model to bring about curriculum change

IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

- Working tirelessly toward attaining the goal

MONITORING AND FEEDING BACK PROGRESS

RE-DIRECTING, RE-DESIGNING AND CHANGING

Enabling Behaviors for Principals in Cooperatively Creating Curriculum is a model that identifies those actions that cause others to further advance their interest and progress in investigating a curriculum area. Visits to the fourteen schools

revealed the following enabling behaviors that principals demonstrated when working with staff:

ENABLING BEHAVIORS

FOR PRINCIPALS IN COOPERATIVELY CHANGING CURRICULUM

FACILITATING COMMUNICATION

- Facilitating the generation of ideas
- Paraphrasing what others say
- Asking probing questions
- Changing viewpoints during discussion (i.e. perspective of the teacher, parent, child, etc.)
- Asking clarifying and follow-up questions
- Flushing out related issues

CREATING A POSITIVE OPEN CLIMATE

- Providing a framework where teachers have freedom to present their own ideas
- Earning respect and trust from the faculty as a result of a credible track record based on actions
- Being honest and as a result creating a climate which inspires trust

BUILDING A VISION WITH THE STAFF

- Providing research and literature
- Providing opportunities to participate in and attend conferences and professional meetings
- Arranging for resource people
- Providing professional experiences with and for staff

DEVELOPING STAFF THROUGH INVOLVEMENT

- Building upon teacher strengths
- Functioning as a member of the team
- Inviting teachers' opinions
- Encouraging teachers to contribute to the agenda
- Creating opportunities for teacher-to-teacher role modeling
- Creating opportunities for teachers to share their ideas

BEING AN EFFECTIVE AND POSITIVE ROLE MODEL

- Demonstrating effective management and organizational skills
- Being energetic and enthusiastic about ideas and programs
- Taking risks
- Personally modeling desired teacher behaviors through teaching activities

The Report

After reviewing the fourteen summaries of the school visits, it was determined that the resulting document was cumbersome in length and included a tremendous amount of extraneous data not necessarily helpful to a school administrator looking for substantive information to help with curriculum development approaches.

To make this a more useful and practical resource, we decided to select four visits that provided for us the best examples of some of the significant components of both models. Even though all of the behavioral moves are not identified in these observations, we believe that the process for identifying the remaining ones is clear.

VISIT A

BACKGROUND

This middle school of about 480 students in grades 6-8 is located in an affluent suburb west of Boston. The principal is proud of a reading/writing workshop course for 7th and 8th graders who do not take a foreign language. The course was re-designed two years ago when the previous reading course, developmental reading, acquired a poor reputation among students and parents and was widely referred to by a derogatory term.

Other projects for which the principal takes responsibility include a three-year sequence of computer instruction for all students and a newly revised sixth grade science course.

The superintendent describes the principal as someone who is good at "identifying key teachers who have innovative ideas." The principal defines this same skill in another way: "I'm good at getting people to do extra work; getting the right people to work together." The principal explains how this is accomplished. "I've been able to get the faculty to think that initiative is rewarded. So, what I do is throw out an idea and see if anyone is interested. The idea is usually a broad structure."

We met with the principal in his office. There, he described the background to the meeting that was about to take place. The co-teachers of the eighth grade reading/writing workshop, an English teacher and a special education teacher, were about to confer with the principal. The teachers had expressed concern about the applicability of the commercially

produced program that they were using. The principal's opinion was, "I'm not worried about the product (meaning the instructional materials). I am more interested in generating excitement for the course."

The conference was held in a conference room, just a few paces from the office.

THE OBSERVATION

As the two young teachers settled into their chairs, the principal had us briefly explain our mission. The principal then quickly got to the point: "Let's talk about how much you can depart from the established curriculum and still feel comfortable." The English teacher responded that there were a number of problems with the commercial program. "It is very skill oriented. Although there is a list of good activities, the activities all require giving directions orally. The students don't understand what to do." The special education teacher added, "To them (the students), it's isolated tasks. They don't see the goal."

The English teacher continued, "The skills are not off base. We've adulterated the activities, particularly the writing -- there is no sense of audience in the activities." This teacher then went on to give several specific examples of how the activities did not direct the students to think about for whom they were writing. She concluded, "These poor kids don't have a clue. They think everything is random." The special education teacher added, "Just think of this type of student. The

activities aren't appropriate. I can't see these kids writing about winter."

At this point the principal paraphrased what had been stated. "You're saying that you feel that you're teaching sub-skills in isclation. That they have no use. There is no articulation. That it is dry." The English teacher responded, "The presentation is dry. It requires a stand-up lecture. Each chunk needs a metaphor so that the process sticks. The directions need to be put in writing. We need to produce a workbook."

The principal continued to probe, "Is there a pattern to your week? That is, are there activities you do every Monday? You know what I mean." The teachers explained some of their on-going routines. The principal persisted, "What would the students say about the course?" The special education teacher responded, "They don't understand the meaning of the course. The top kids are getting good at finding detail in their reading and are becoming better writers." The principal continued, "Give me some examples, some names of students who haven't done well." The teachers began reciting names as the principal nodded knowingly.

Again the principal probed, "What are we doing now that would improve reading?" The English teacher addressed the question: "They can't assess learning reading skills as being important. It is not tangible enough." The principal paraphrased, "We have to make it breathe," then added, "How long would it take to revise the program?" The English teacher

responded, "It would take at least through this year and this summer to put it into shape -- there's no way around it -- a lot of time is being wasted this year. As we're going, we're writing notes to ourselves so we could modify later." The principal continued probing, "What's wrong skill-wise? Is this what the students need?"

Both teachers agreed that the skills were on target and gave some specific examples. The English teacher clarified how she perceived the problem: "The skills are good. It's how they (the skills) are presented that needs to be changed." She went on to present an analysis of the positives and negatives of the program as she saw it.

The principal then took yet another approach: "Does the course meet the right amount of time? Is co-teaching working?" Both questions got quick positive answers. The principal pressed on, "What do the kids make of the fact that you co-teach?" The special education teacher answered that it was now a given and they'd grown used to it. The principal followed up, "Do they think of the two of you as special education and English?" The special education teacher paused momentarily and then said, "Yes, you can't get away from it." The English teacher summarized her thoughts, "There was resistance at the beginning. Who is the easier teacher?"

Next, the principal veered off in another direction: "Do you assign homework?" "Only finishing what gets started in class. There shouldn't be," answered the special education teacher. The principal followed up, "Is the outside reading

double counted, once for you and once for the English class?" The answer was no, only for reading.

The discussion finally went on to deal with the availability of planning time in which the teachers could adapt large portions of the packaged program. They agreed that the principal would facilitate the work being done during inservice days and that the two teachers would be released from their department obligations. The principal also suggested that they use common planning time "so that we know what to do this summer."

The forty-five minute session concluded with the principal summing up as follows: "Where do we go from here? Yes, it's okay that you put your creative devices to work and revise those sections that are not useful. I'll come up with a schedule to work out a meeting plan and get it to you. There will be summer work. It is a priority."

POST-CONFERENCE

Q: Why did you ask if there was a pattern to their week?

A: I wanted to know their mind set. You reach a comfort stage when a pattern develops. The kids need expectations and routines too.

Q: You asked what was being done to improve reading. What did you learn from the response?

A: That the special education teacher still doesn't have a good feel for the reading component.

Q: You continued to probe about the skills and whether they were the right skills. What did you learn from that?

A: I verified that the skills weren't the problem. They said we aren't teaching the wrong things. We need specific ways of teaching these skills. [The principal went on to tell us about his daily classroom walk-throughs and said that this conference was a verification of what had been observed.]

Q: What did you have in mind when you asked for the names of the students who were having difficulties with the course?

A: I know the kids and could predict those students' reactions. It helped me see the whole thing better to figure out how to enable the teachers. I am personally responsible for figuring out how it feels to be a student in this school all day in all classes. I want to be able to look the community in the eye and say that all our programs are good, not just that we have a good Latin program for the top kids.

ANALYSIS

This principal is masterful in terms of facilitating communication. What we find lacking in the effective schools literature is a clear description of "communication skills". A reading of the observation above provides rich examples of specific communication skills. This principal starts the conference with a general problem, "...how much can you depart from the established curriculum and still feel comfortable?" This statement facilitates the generation of ideas. The principal carefully listens to the teacher, and when he finally

responds, almost all utterances are in the form of questions.

The teachers indicate that the program is "very skill-oriented". They think there is "a list of good activities," but that "the activities all require giving directions orally. The students don't understand what to do." "They (the students) don't see the goal (to the activities)." The teachers go on to say that "the skills are not off base...there is no sense of audience in the activities."

To all of this, the principal paraphrases what they say. "You're saying that you feel that you're teaching sub-skills in isolation. That they have no use. There is no articulation. That it is dry." This clearly communicates that the principal has been listening carefully and has gleaned the intended message. It also provides the teachers with the opportunity to further clarify their messages with additional supporting evidence. The English teacher says, "The presentation is dry. It requires a stand-up lecture...the directions need to be put in writing. We need to produce a workbook."

The principal then uses probing questions. "Is there a pattern to your week?...Are there activities you do every Monday?...What did the students say about the course?" The principal also asks clarifying questions, "Give me some examples, some names of students who have not done well." He goes on to ask follow-up questions, "What are we doing now that would improve reading?"

From all of these responses they learn that most of the students don't understand the structure of the course and that

only isolated skills are being mastered.

The principal nods his head knowingly as the teachers recite the names of students who are encountering difficulty. He knows the students' names. The principal earns respect and trust as a result of his credible track record based on his actions. The principal goes back to probing questions, "What are we doing now that would improve reading...how long would it take to revise the program?" They learn that the activities are not tangible enough, and that it would take "at least through this year and this summer to put it into shape." He also flushes out a related issue with a follow-up question: "Is co-teaching working...what do the kids make of the fact that you co-teach?" The special education teacher responds that it was now a given and that the students have grown used to it. Again, the principal follows up, "Do they think of the two of you as sped and English?" After a momentary pause, "Yes, you can't get away from it," says the special education teacher. "There was resistance at the beginning. Who is the easier teacher?" replies the English teacher. It is also interesting to note that the principal changes viewpoints during the discussion. That is, he asks about the perspective of the teacher, and then asks what the child makes of it.

From a problem-solving point of view, it is most noteworthy to analyze the interrelationship between our two models. The principal paraphrases the teachers' ideas as a way of generating possible solutions. His point in using probing questions and follow-up questions is to facilitate arriving at a definition of

the real problem. Is the real problem the activities in the commercial curriculum? Is it that the co-teaching is not working? Is it that the teachers need written directions delivered through a workbook?

We finally see, toward the end of the meeting, the principal beginning to deal with the issues of planning time so that the teachers could adapt the packaged program. The principal indicates that he will facilitate exempting them during inservice days. He suggests the use of common planning time in order to prepare for their curriculum work during the summer. These are all examples of implementing a plan so that the goal could be attained. Finally, the principal sets the priority by concluding, "There will be summer work. It is a priority." We also see through these series of actions effective management and organizational skills being demonstrated.

We conclude that there is a dynamic interrelationship between enabling behaviors and curriculum changing skills. To better illustrate this conclusion, using the above analysis, we offer the following chart:

INTERRELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ENABLING BEHAVIORS AND CURRICULUM CHANGING SKILLS

Enabling Behaviors	Curriculum Changing Skills
Paraphrasing what others say	Participating in generating ideas through brainstorming
Asking probing questions	Defining the real problem
Flushing out related issues	Implementing the plan
Demonstrating effective management and organization skills	Setting priorities

VISIT B

BACKGROUND

The K-6 school visited is located in an upper middle class community in northeastern Massachusetts. As explained by the principal, the town of 27,000 has changed over the past fifteen years from a rural-suburban town with a relatively stable population of 18,000-20,000 to an upwardly mobile, residential area.

The principal of the building is in her second year. This is her first principalship, and she brings to the position previous experience as a coordinator of language arts and classroom teacher in a growing seashore community in Massachusetts. She takes pride in the staff involvement she has developed and is particularly pleased with activities and programs that have stimulated independent student reading and critical-creative thinking efforts. The assistant superintendent describes the principal as "a take charge individual who is articulate; creative; and very actively engaged with staff, children, and parents".

The school secretary welcomed us to the building and directed us to the principal's office where we learned about the principal-teacher interactive session we were to observe. The principal explained that the staff had been studying Mortimer Adler's Paidea Proposal. Materials had been studied and mini-seminars arranged with each grade level team of three to four, K-6 teachers to study the seminar process and examine strategies to

implement the technique in the classroom.

We were escorted to one of the classrooms where four teachers and the principal were to meet over lunch. The teachers arrived, took their places around the hexagonally shaped table, were introduced to the observers, and the session began.

THE OBSERVATION

The principal began the session by asking, "What is a seminar?" Following the response she further probed, "What does that mean?" To help clarify the answer she queried, "How does that differ from what we have been doing?" Reference was made to information previously read in articles and chapters of books the principal has copied for them.

The questioning-response-discussion mode continued with, "How is a seminar different from didactic discussion?" Following thoughtful response, "Could you give some examples of those differences? What are the key elements that distinguish the two?"

At this point the principal suggested, "Let's take a look at the leader's role in the seminar. What are the key responsibilities of the leader in the seminar? Can you give some examples that you've either read about or tried?"

The discussion then focused on strategies a leader could use. The principal asked, "If there is a lull in the discussion, what does Mortimer Adler suggest we do?" Following a response from a staff member, the principal queried, "Did that suggestion work for you?" "Tell us about it?" "Why do you think it was

successful?"

To continue with knowledge building, the principal asked, "How does the Socratic method compare to the seminar? Can you think of applications of the seminar approach to our current curriculum?" Following some suggestions related to language arts and social studies, she asked, "Why would the seminar approach be helpful in either of those areas?"

To help staff with assess their own readiness to utilize the approach, the principal asked, "What more do we need to learn about to further help us with using the seminar approach?" One teacher responded, "I am becoming more comfortable because of our recent discussions and readings." Another indicated, "I was really pleased with pupil responses to a discussion the other day. I guess with more experience, I'll be able to use the seminar more effectively." The principal nodded her understanding and offered, "With additional experiences, all of us will feel more and more comfortable."

After about forty-five minutes, the principal reviewed what was discussed by saying, "Let's wrap up and look at what we have done". She then summarized the significant factors that were analyzed and followed that with the distribution of a reading list for both teachers and children compiled by a Paidea network school in Tennessee indicating, "I found these materials to be very useful. Perhaps they will help you to analyze some of the things we discussed today."

The group then visited a grade three classroom where the principal had planned a demonstration seminar.

DEMONSTRATION LESSON

The principal began the discussion by asking for a definition of a seminar and writing the children's responses on the chalkboard. The story Frederick was read orally to the children and illustrations in the book shared for all to see. Open-ended questions about the characters, setting and story theme were asked, and responses by children to both the principal and other students were invited. While the discussion occurred, the three teachers observed and took careful notes.

The children were eager to respond to the principal's questioning, and their answers were clear and articulate. The atmosphere was comfortable and non-threatening, and children seemed to enjoy talking with the principal. One was heard at the conclusion of the seminar to ask, "Will you do this again with us?" The pacing of the lesson maintained the flow of discussion and kept the children on task and actively involved.

Toward the conclusion of the lesson, the significance of the jobs/responsibilities of the characters in the story became the focus of interest. The principal explained that each child would have a chance to further discuss their opinions by writing about what they thought were the most important jobs in their community. Once children began the related follow up, the principal concluded the lesson by circulating around in the room, providing extra support as needed.

POST-CONFERENCE

Q: How do you view your leadership behavior?

A: I see myself as a facilitator rather than a top-down manager of the school. I am a change agent who defines the ideal as ...where we would like to be.

Q: In today's observation you made several references to the work of Mortimer Adler. Is the use of research important to you?

A: I think staff would tell you that research is important in my leadership behavior...When working with staff I often will suggest, 'Let's find out what research says about this.'

Q: Can you give some other examples of curriculum changes that resulted from staff discussion and review of research articles?

A: I am pleased with our successes in process writing, problem solving in math and independent reading... In all instances, participation by faculty resulted in some very exciting opportunities for children.

Q: To what do you attribute staff's willingness to try new approaches without fear of failure?

A: We enjoy mutual respect and trust. One teacher recently said to me, 'The faculty may not agree with everything you suggest, but there is respect here.'

Q: The demonstration lesson seemed to go quite well. Do you often provide staff with such clarity of recommendations

in instruction?

A: It's important for staff to know that they are not alone in their efforts and that I will work with them in improving their teaching. One teacher said to another at a recent meeting, 'It was suggested that I try this method. I tried it and it works.' I try to back up what I say with books, articles or research and to deliver this material in a timely fashion.

Q: In today's discussion it appeared that some members of the grade three team were at a higher level of readiness for the seminar approach than others. What will you do for those who need more time, preparation, support?

A: Some are more prepared. I will try to have these people work with those who need more support. In addition, I will spend more time with those who need assistance -- encouraging them, sharing articles and perhaps having them observe in classrooms where the seminars are going well.

Q: How do you make time available to provide instructional leadership in the consistant way you do with the number of responsibilities you have?

A: I schedule myself so that instructional leadership is a priority. Obviously I stay away from busy times when others may need me -- before school, recess periods, lunch. My day is long and exhausting. In addition, I try to delegate to others to free myself for important things.

ANALYSIS

In reviewing the observation, what curriculum development behaviors were identified?

Synthesizing the Idea - The principal shared the seminar process with staff through examination of literature, discussions and demonstration teaching. Plans for follow-up support were developed and opportunities for teacher input provided throughout the activities planned. Ideas were initiated with total staff through general discussion and extended to grade levels and individual classrooms through meetings and individul support sessions. Opportunities for cross-pollinating ideas were incorporated into the action plan by considering the need to arrange for some cooperative planning between those prepared for seminars and those less ready.

Cooperatively Assessing the Readiness of Staff to Accept Ideas - the principal organized grade level sessions examining the seminar approach and readiness of staff to incorporate it into instruction. Information concerning staff need was acquired through input received at grade level meetings and subsequent individual sessions. The process of the seminar incorporation was approached in a scholarly manner. "What does Mortimer Adler suggest we do? How does the seminar differ from the Socratic Method? What does research say about this?" These were all scholarly questions pursued in the observation.

Setting Priorities - The goals of the seminar have been well defined and developed and specific plans to initiate the effort organized. Carefully structured mini-seminars for each grade

level team with follow-up model lessons were planned and presented.

Implementing the Plan - The principal works tirelessly toward attaining the goal. In the post-observation conference the principal stated, "I schedule myself so that instructional leadership is a priority." Even though she has a number of responsibilities, the established goal of the school will be accomplished in spite of the fact that her day is "long and exhausting".

In addition to these curriculum skills, there were other enabling behaviors exhibited by the principal that helped staff to cooperatively create curriculum.

Facilitating Communication - The principal asked a number of probing questions during the grade level discussion and followed these with appropriate follow-up questions to further clarify participants' viewpoints. This approach facilitated the generation of ideas concerning activities successful for some teachers and potentially adaptable by others.

Creating a Positive Open Climate - An obvious strength of the principal was the respect and trust that she enjoyed with her faculty. She has a credible track record of delivery of support and materials and, as a member of the team, has developed a climate of trust.

Building A Vision with the Staff - Research and literature were provided staff and discussions conducted to examine information. Through follow up grade level and individual discussion, additional teacher input could contribute to the

vision of the school.

Being an Effective and Positive Role Model - The principal was energetic and enthusiastic about ideas expressed regarding the seminar process and personally modeled the desired teaching behaviors in the demonstration lesson. This skill, in particular, substantially contributed to the credibility of her leadership. She is a non-hesitant risk taker who believes in the vision of the school and works tirelessly with staff to support their efforts in creating change.

INTERRELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ENABLING BEHAVIORS AND CURRICULUM CHANGING SKILLS

Enabling Behaviors	Curriculum Changing Skills
Facilitating communication	Synthesizing the idea
	Extending the idea from the classroom to the grade level
Creating a positive, open climate	Cross-pollinating ideas
Building a vision with staff through providing research and literature	Approaching the process in a scholarly manner
Being an effective and positive role model	Cooperatively assessing readiness of staff to accept ideas

VISIT C

BACKGROUND

This grade seven and eight middle school is located in a big city. It contains 730 students and a faculty of about seventy teachers. The principal is assisted by two assistant principals. The school is designated as a magnet school as part of the city's desegregation plan. Thirty-seven percent of the students are minorities.

The school is organized into mini-schools. There is one mini-school devoted to the performing arts, another to interdisciplinary teaching with a emphasis on computers, and a third to career education. The superintendent describes this principal as, "...present on the scene making judgments, keeping active, alive and trying different approaches with students." The principal is self-described as a catalyst. "It is my job to bring ideas to the teachers, to be a guide. It is important that teachers see you in action. I'm out in the trenches working as a member of the team. I want to get involved with the teachers." The principal is quite experienced. Over the six years of his principalship there has been virtually no teacher turnover, and teacher attendance is ninety-eight percent. The principal reports these facts with a great deal of justifiable pride.

We arrived at the school as dismissal was taking place. The principal was pointed out to us at the bus loading area where four teachers were assisting him. We were warmly greeted by the principal who enthusiastically described how we were going to sit

in on a weekly interdisciplinary team meeting which would be attended by the eleven teachers who were responsible for the eighth grade computer team. The principal indicated that all of these teachers attended on a voluntary basis and were paid an hourly stipend for this extra service.

THE OBSERVATION

The planning meeting took place in a classroom with the eleven teachers situated facing the principal who was perched on the edge of a desk. The meeting started off with a parent and a student in attendance. The teachers gave the parent a weekly progress report on the child. The child seemed very pleased with what was being said about him. The parent, even though there were twelve teachers in the room, seemed at ease.

After the parent and student left, the principal passed out some news clippings regarding a trip that the team had recently taken to the Boston Museum of Science to see the exhibit on robots. The team began to review the follow-up robot contest for which students created their own robots. The principal probed, "How did the robot unit tie into your different curricula?" Turning to the computer teacher, "Al, what was your involvement?" The computer teacher enthusiastically shared stories about his students making robots. The principal then turned to the foreign language teacher, "Can you explain your role?" The foreign language teacher responded, "The students identified parts of the body in the foreign language. They wrote comic strips. They wrote commands for the robot. They learned

vocabulary words. I worked with the art teacher on some of this." Turning to the industrial arts teacher the principal said, "Paul!" Paul responded that he had students study careers in robotics and that they explored the manufacturing aspects and the futuristics.

The principal responded, "This might be a good time, Paul, to tell everyone about the technical aspects of robots." As the industrial arts teacher began to share some information, other teachers joined in to share some of their resources which included photocopied articles from journals and newspapers.

The principal continued, "George, do we want to do this again next year?" Turning to the rest of the group, "Do you want George to get involved with the technical stuff?" A short discussion followed during which time virtually everyone supported the idea of doing the robotics unit again the following year and made specific recommendations as to how it might be done even better. They agreed that they had learned a great deal this year. They thought it would be a very good idea to continue to collect and share technical information and also pursue other resources such as the French River Teachers' Center, local electricians and electrical engineers, etc.

The principal began summing up, "I hope we can set George loose in terms of what is out there. Maybe we can have a unit by June. I hope we can get Cathy's input in terms of the science. I hope we can tie the science into the math." Both the math teacher and the science teacher responded by summarizing what they had done in relation to the unit. Finally, the principal

asked, "Anyone else?" One of the computer teachers responded that he had an information request, that it would be valuable to all teachers to share whatever information that they had put together. The principal ended this portion of the agenda, "Let's close this up. I hear a consensus, yes, as a theme we want to do this again next year! I would like to see more of a link between the math and the science -- some kind of culminating experience."

The meeting continued with a discussion regarding a pending field trip to George's Island. The principal asked, "Have we set a date? Are there any additions to the outline?" Teachers began to brainstorm what they could do relative to their subject areas. The English teacher would have her classes read some poems by Poe. The social studies teacher had already contacted a friend in Boston who had done some original research on the history and legends of Boston Harbor. Another teacher had found an article about Boston Harbor. The science teacher was going to follow up on having students identify the flora and fauna of the island. The principal interjected, "How often do you want to meet? Would twice a week with the team be about right?" This discussion carried through until the end of the meeting.

POST-CONFERENCE

Q: What do you consider to be the major issue throughout this meeting?

A: To pull together the robot unit in order to reach closure; to get some thinking going on the George's Island trip.

Q: We noticed that there were eleven teachers on the team and

that all participated in the discussion.

A: The major subject area teachers used to make up the teams. The specialists felt like second class citizens. Now everyone is part of the team. It has helped to jell the faculty. The teachers feel comfortable. The conversation is open, fluid and free.

Q: Where do you hope today's discussion will take you?

A: I hope to get interdisciplinary units.

Q: I see you as a kind of "cross-pollinator" of people's ideas. Is that accurate?

A: The teachers perceive me as a helping person. In sports you would call me a team builder. I try to get everyone involved. That's my idea of staff development.

Q: You took notes as the meeting progressed. What were you jotting down?

A: I write down all the things that need follow-up.

Q: Where did these themes for the units come from? What was the origin?

A: The themes came from the Wednesday meetings. They were brainstormed. We go with about four themes per year. They can be whatever we want them to be.

Q: I saw you working towards a consensus. For instance, you kept asking the group if they wanted to do the robot unit again next year.

A: I'm a reasonable guy. I believe in teacher decision making.

Q: As outsiders, I'm sure we missed some of what was going on

at the meeting. What did we miss?

A: Getting the social studies teacher more and more involved. I'm beginning to see more cooperation between some people who had been competitors.

ANALYSIS

A review of the observation shows the principal posing probing questions and generating ideas. He asks, "How did the robot unit tie into your different curricula?" He asks specific teachers repeatedly, "What was your involvement? Can you explain your role? Tell everyone about..." A good deal of data is identified from diverse sources as a result of these stimuli. The teachers related to one another what students have been doing in each of their classes. The students have made robots in the computer science class and studied the names of body parts in foreign language classes. The art teacher has worked with the foreign language teachers in helping the students create comic strips.

The principal asks the industrial arts teacher to share some of his resources which the teacher has copied from journals and newspapers. This is another way of generating ideas. In this case the principal guides the planning process in a more scholarly manner. Later, the teachers agree that it would be a good idea to continue to collect and share technical information, and begin to brainstorm where they could get that information.

This portion of the agenda is summed up as follows: "Let's close this up. I hear a consensus...we want to do this again

next year...I would like to see more of a link between the math and the science..." Here we see this principal doing his best work in synthesizing ideas. He frames the "big picture". Later, during the post-conference he tells us that he is trying to get teachers to work together on interdisciplinary units.

The second half of the meeting deals with the field trip to George's Island and demonstrates the use of brainstorming as a means of generating ideas as possible solutions. The majority of teachers volunteer their ideas. This demonstrates that there is a framework where teachers have the freedom to present their own ideas. This only occurs as a result of creating a climate of trust.

During the meeting we observed the principal jotting down notes to himself. When we asked him what he was jotting down, he told us that there were things that needed follow-up. Obviously, this principal demonstrates effective management and organizational skills.

Finally, we asked what we might have missed that was going on at the meeting. The principal responded that he was, "getting the social studies teacher more and more involved." Our notes reveal that he asks the social studies teacher what he has been doing, particularly in conjunction with other team members. In a suitable manner the principal is developing staff in terms of teacher-to-teacher role modeling.

This principal demonstrates basic communication skills. He facilitates the generation of ideas and asks probing questions. He does nothing fancy. However, underlying this whole process

lies a spirit of honesty, trust, and hard work. Again, we see an interrelationship between enabling behaviors and curriculum changing skills.

INTERRELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ENABLING BEHAVIORS AND CURRICULUM CHANGING SKILLS

Enabling Behaviors	Curriculum Changing Skills
Facilitating the generation of ideas	Identifying data from diverse sources
Asking probing questions	Approaching the process in a scholarly manner

We also see interrelationships among various curriculum changing skills.

Curriculum Changing Skills	Curriculum Changing Skills
Publicly stating agreed-upon goals	Cross-pollinating the idea with other ideas
	Framing ideas into the "big picture"

VISIT D

BACKGROUND

This 800 pupil middle school is located in a middle class suburban community of 20,000. The school contains grades 6-8 and occupies a building that was formerly the high school. The community has undergone rapid commercial development but has recently maintained a stable school population after experiencing a period of declining enrollment.

The principal of the school is an experienced administrator who has been principal of the building for several years. He is described by his superintendent as a highly energetic, enthusiastic supporter of change who is a driving force in the development of middle school approaches. The principal is proud of the accomplishments of his staff and explains that a lot of time is spent "making the building more comfortable for middle school children." He is pleased with the team teaching commitments of staff and feels that through teaming, needs of children at this age are more effectively met.

We met in the principal's office where the discussion with three English teachers was to take place. The office was comfortably arranged with two couches, table lamps, displays of professional journals and prints on the walls. The principal explained that he meets regularly with both grade level and curriculum area teams to discuss curriculum and instruction issues and questions.

The three teachers arrived, sat together on one couch and

were introduced to the observers.

THE OBSERVATION

The principal began the session by asking the three teachers about the impact on their program of the loss of one of two computer labs due to space demands. Teachers indicated a serious impact, and the principal asked clarifying questions to further probe: "Please explain how the computer lab integrates with your writing program?" "How much time do children now receive in the lab?" "How does this compare to last year?" "What adjustments have you made to accommodate demand?" Following these questions he queried, "Tell us more about the editorial growth children have experienced in the past through computers?" Seeking suggestions, he asked, "What are your recommendations to improve the time demands so that needs could be better met?" Expressing appreciation for teacher input, he promised further attention to the concern and additional opportunities for opinion when a recommendation was developed for central office review.

After jotting down notes about teacher responses to questions, he asked, "Tell us your opinions about the workshop held for staff yesterday." Teachers comfortably shared positive reactions. They agreed with the principal's interpretation of the staff's written evaluations of the session that more work is needed on student transfer and application of concepts. He asked, "In what ways in English can we work on higher order thinking skills?" Several ideas were offered which the principal wrote down and indicated would be topics for discussion at future

meetings.

Next, the principal discussed a unit devoted to the study of a novel and its coordination with grammar instruction which was also required that term. The relationship of this unit to work being done under a Horace Mann Grant the teachers received was explained. One teacher stated, "This is an initial experience in preparing a research paper. It is an outgrowth of the work with John Collins, and the intent is to guide children through the research process." The principal asked about final results and another teacher explained, "Instruction will incorporate materials into writing research papers and will reinforce critical thinking skills." The principal commented, "We noticed in the recent assessment testing that students writing in their own words is a weak area." One teacher responded, "There is a need for students to separate fact from opinion when they write and to provide appropriate support for their ideas." "What can we do to help children improve this skill?" the principal probed. "Perhaps we could look at ways to focus on this." "Is this something we need to look at?" he asked. One teacher responded, "I think we need to concentrate on this a little more. Perhaps we could look at some activities to reinforce these skills at future meetings."

Throughout the discussion the conversation was light and lively. Good pacing, effective use of humor and good listening by the principal kept the discussion on track and provided helpful feedback for further consideration.

After about thirty-five minutes of discussion, the principal

spent about ten minutes in sharing time where one teacher described her experiences at a middle school conference. Grouping arrangements utilized by other middle schools were considered and agreement expressed on the value of heterogeneous arrangements. In evaluating what their school is trying to do, one teacher said, "This staff really is quite good. We make decisions ourselves after looking at options and pride ourselves on being professional."

Planning of arrangements for a field trip to a professional play completed discussion at the meeting.

POST-CONFERENCE

Q: Before the meeting with the three English teachers, you shared with us your goals for the session. What do you feel you accomplished today?

A: I believe we further promoted collegiality and sharing. Effective staff growth is facilitated through this process.

Q: How would you describe your behavior in meetings with grade level or curriculum area teams?

A: Aggressive with ideas but cognizant of the need to involve staff in problem analysis.

Q: What if the decision, such as the need for an additional computer lab, doesn't materialize and works against the staff?

A: At least they will feel as if they have been listened to and had their ideas incorporated into a proposal.

Q: What strengths do you bring to these meetings?

A: I am fairly well read and feel comfortable in delegating effectively. I have a high energy level and listen well.

Q: Returning to the agenda, in at least two instances in the meeting, issues surfaced that will require future staff discussion. What are your plans for these questions?

A: I have notes here about higher order thinking skills and pupil skills in writing so that they provide support for their ideas. These will become agenda topics in future meetings with this group. Obviously neither of these issues can be resolved in one session. They will become topical areas for discussion over several weeks.

Q: What is your usual strategy in learning from staff their opinions concerning curriculum issues that require attention?

A: One strategy I use is to launch trial balloons to learn about agreements and disagreements. Input opportunities can then be offered in order to assist with decision making.

Q: How do you relate this approach to curriculum development?

A: Curriculum development starts with a germ of an idea. Good staff people implement ideas read about or learned through discussion. The principal's job is not to stop ideas. If he hears about ideas from staff to make things better, then it's his job to remove blockers or obstacles.

Q: Was there an idea expressed in this meeting that you would like to further pursue?

A: I agree with the statement that children need to learn to separate fact from opinion as they write, and to also more effectively support their ideas. Future work will examine this idea and hopefully improve instruction.

Q: You mentioned before that an effective principal removes blockers or obstacles. What are some of the things you do to accomplish this? What is the result of this?

A: Provide resources to improve the program -- materials, people if possible. Stay with staff members in their effort, support what they do and encourage them to work cooperatively together in addressing and resolving issues. In answer to the second part of your question, I try to give public credit for the effort of a staff member (and)...above all structure the pursuit of an idea so that all are encouraged by that effort.

ANALYSIS

In reviewing the observation, what curriculum development behaviors were identified?

The principal gathered data by asking staff their opinions about impact on the English program as a result of a reduction in computer labs. He cooperatively analyzed the issue of the reduction and sought staff suggestions for a solution to the problem. He also indicated that when a formal recommendation was forwarded to central office for further review, additional staff

input would be sought.

He further actively sought faculty opinion concerning the writing program. Once their concerns were raised about the separation of fact from opinion and the need for students to support their ideas when writing, he promised that these issues would be future agenda topics. Generating ideas leading to possible solutions is a skill that was demonstrated in this observation and was a significant leadership function that the principal emphasized in the post-observation conference.

In addition to the curriculum development activities, were there other principal enabling behaviors that helped staff to cooperatively create curriculum?

The principal is a facilitator of communication. He encouraged the expression of ideas, asked probing questions and clarified the opinions of others by asking appropriate follow-up questions. He developed a relaxed open climate that encouraged participation and enabled teachers to feel that their ideas were accepted and contributions appreciated.

His greatest strength is in developing staff through involvement. He is a participating member of grade level and subject area teams. Teacher opinions are invited and suggestions for future agenda topics encouraged through the lively question-response-follow-up question interchange. Through the concept of team building, so essentional to the operation of a successful school, ideas are readily shared, programs can be more carefully monitored and evaluated, and approaches for improvement more successfully developed.

INTERRELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ENABLING BEHAVIORS AND CURRICULUM CHANGING SKILLS

Enabling Behaviors	Curriculum Changing Skills
Facilitating communication	Cooperatively analyzing issues
Developing staff through involvement	Generating ideas leading to possible solutions
Providing a relaxed, open climate	

CONCLUSIONS

What conclusions can be drawn from the results of the study? Several significant ideas emerge:

1. There are observable behaviors and skills that principals exhibit while cooperatively planning curriculum.
   As a result of sitting in during curriculum planning sessions conducted by our fourteen school principals and creating a script of each of these sessions, we were struck with the commonalities among many of the principals in terms of their skills and behaviors. The skills and behaviors manifested themselves through actual quotations, word emphasis and gestures, and reactions to the thoughts of others involved in the planning session. While analyzing our data, we challenged ourselves to provide evidence in terms of a quote, a gesture, etc. which in effect documented the skill or behavior.

2. There are patterns in the behaviors and skills exhibited.
   Of the twenty-two skills and the twenty-three enabling behaviors that we documented, no one single principal demonstrated all of these skills and behaviors. However, all of these skills and behaviors were observed in two or more principals, and most of these skills and behaviors were observed in the majority of the principals. That is to say that we witnessed a pattern to the behaviors that

we were seeing. The curriculum development skills followed a problem-solving type of process. What was perhaps more striking was that there was a good deal more patterning with regard to the enabling behaviors. Virtually all of the principals used a wide variety of facilitation skills to encourage communication and create a positive open climate. In terms of the curriculum development skills, there were instances where only two or three principals exhibited some of the skills (e.g. synthesizing ideas or cooperatively assessing the readiness of staff to accept ideas).

3. <u>The patterns that emerge can be organized into two models</u>. As a result of analyzing all of the skills and behaviors that emerged from our fourteen visits, we discovered that the skills and behaviors fell into two broad catagories: skills that involved a problem-solving approach to curriculum planning and behaviors which enabled that problem-solving approach to operate smoothly. Thus, we separated our data into two models. Next, we looked for relationships among the various skills and behaviors. What emerged from this analysis was a curriculum change model that contained twelve clusters of skills, each made up of anywhere from one to five skills, and an enabling behaviors model that contained five clusters of behaviors with a range of three to seven behaviors per cluster. These patterns, we believe, are obvious and undeniable.

However, we readily acknowledge that a good deal of subjectivity on our part probably went into this model-making process. Perhaps other minds would have categorized the data and sequenced the components of the models differently. Nevertheless, one should not lose sight of the fact that there are indeed strong patterns and interrelationships and that the models are developed directly from observable data.

4. <u>There is a link between the enabling behaviors model and the "effective schools" literature</u>.

Our reading of the "effective schools" literature points out the importance of the school principal and his or her ability to be a good communicator, have a vision, involve teachers in the decision-making process, establish high standards for student performance, and monitor and evaluate achievement. It was no surprise to us that we observed many of these same behaviors and that patterns developed which led us to incorporate some of these behaviors into this model. Our understanding, however, of the "effective schools" literature is that the description of the "good principal" was conceptualized as a result of self-reporting using questionnaires. It initially was not based upon observable data. Only later in the "effective schools" research would researchers go out to find these skills in real live "good principals".

5. The acquisition of these skills was learned by principals through intuition, trial and error, on-the-job training and professional training.

We questioned several of our principals with regard to how they learned some of the specific skills and behaviors that were demonstrated during their planning sessions. We acknowledge that the responses we received do not represent a scientific sample. However, the principals with whom we did raise the question generally responded that they acquired these skills on-the-job as the result of many years of chairing meetings or being members of committees. The impression we came away with was that our principals did not become skillful as a result of formal training. From this we can only draw the conclusion that there is a void in the formal training of school leaders in terms of the graduate schools and the various kinds of professional development programs.

6. Principals could be trained to apply these skills and behaviors in a more systematic way.

Because the skills and behaviors are observable and can be readily documented, we believe that these skills and behaviors can be taught in a systematic manner. There is a clear need for this kind of training. What is needed

are credible delivery systems so that such vital development of skills is not left to accidental and incidental individual experiences.

7. Principals often operate in isolation from their peers. During the post-observation conference, we asked most of our principals if they were members of any network of principals such as a neighborhood principals' group, professional association, a principals' center, etc. Most of our principals were not active members of any kind of network. The few that were active members indicated that although they enjoyed the social contact, they derived very little in the way of enhancing their professional abilities. We followed up by asking, "To whom do you go to get effective feedback?" The response was almost universal -- no one. Some cited their spouses who were managers in other fields as providing a large measure of support. Others indicated that they had had a mentor earlier in their career who was no longer available. Principals need a viable, practical support system where they can go and get feedback in a non-judgmental, non-threatening way.

8. Principals express a need to validate or correct their practices through effective professional feedback. During the course of the post-observation conferences many of our principals asked for feedback from us in terms of

what we saw and what we liked or didn't like. This pattern repeated itself over and over again. We interpreted this felt need on the part of our principals as a desire on their part to get objective feedback. Peer coaching seems to have a great deal of promise as a type of feedback delivery system through which principals could share observations in non-judgemental ways using reflective and clarifying questioning techniques.

Recommendations

Although this study was only an initial attempt to isolate and identify those behavioral characteristics that enable certain principals to work very successfully with their staffs to create curriculum, the following are some significant recommendations developed from analysis of the conclusions:

1. There should be more visits to principals in order to validate the evidence gathered and to further develop the tentative models.
2. Staff development activities should be designed to train school principals in using the identified skills.
3. This staff development process should establish a peer coaching network so the skills and behaviors could be practiced with available feedback mechanisms.

4. The professional leadership organizations and the Commonwealth Leadership Academy should take responsibility for providing these kinds of skill development training opportunities and support networks to principals.

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It is our hope that the models documented in this study will serve as a vital resource for principals and other curriculum staff by providing:

- A process guide for curriculum development
- A checklist against which to evaluate one's own practices
- A tool for identification of specific areas for further professional development
- A framework for a training program aimed at increasing professional skills.

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